

## TAYLOR'S TIPS for a productive writing career...



Dear Fellow Writer,

Hope your summer was fantastic. Fall seems to be descending quite rapidly. The days are getting cooler and there's a nippiness in the air. Is that even a word? Probably not, but I like it.

Sometimes, we use words that we make up, sometimes we must stick to the rules. When it comes to submissions, adhering to the guidelines is the best course to take. But things have changed, haven't they? Remember the days of old when we hand-typed a cover letter, enclosed our manuscript, inserted a SASE (self-addressed stamped envelope) and mailed a submission via the U.S. Postal Service? Then we waited and waited, hoping for a favorable reply to appear in our mailbox.



Now most of our submissions are via the Internet. And protocol demands that we know what we are doing.

## **OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW**

### **SUBMITTING THROUGH A WEBSITE:**

You've written a story for an anthology like Chicken Soup and they want submissions through their website. You find a form there to fill out with your name, address, phone number and email address. They also have a drop-down box where you indicate what book your story is for and then another box where they ask you to "cut and paste" your story. Do you know how to do that and what should be included? First, minimize the CS page and open your manuscript. Then "select all" and "copy." Then close that file and re-open the minimized CS page again. The box will appear. Put your cursor in that box and press "paste."

**BUT...**here's the important part. Be sure to include **EVERYTHING** in that box. Not just the story title on down, but your name, address, phone number, email address, word count, and then the actual story below. Why include all that information when they have it in the boxes above? Because you never know when your contact information will become separated from your story.

Even include a bio at the end of your piece. This will save the editors time down the road. They won't have to ask you for one later when they accept your story (think positive).

### **SUBMITTING THROUGH EMAIL:**

Say a market like *Guideposts* indicates an email address for submissions. How do you do that? Do you paste your story into the body of the email or do you send an attachment? If there is no indication that an attachment is unacceptable, then send your story as an attachment.

So, do you need to type something in the email? Yup, you do. Open your email program and look at that blank page. Consider it a "cover letter" like the days of old. Keep it extremely brief, polite, and professional. If you know the name of the person accepting submissions, by all means use it, or just use "Dear Editor."

### **SAMPLE:**

Dear Ms. Reynolds,

The attached story is submitted for *My Mom is My Hero* and is titled, "Dance With Me." I am always open to editorial suggestions and changes, and would welcome working with you on the piece.

I look forward to hearing from you.

All the best,  
B.J.

B.J. Taylor  
email: [bj.taylor@verizon.net](mailto:bj.taylor@verizon.net)  
web: [www.clik.to/bjtaylor](http://www.clik.to/bjtaylor)

Again, include the information at the end of the email like your email address and website, if you have one, just to be sure they have it when they print it (most email programs will not print the actual email address at the top, so your contact information could be lost if you don't include it). Better to be safe than sorry, right?

And if a market indicates that they do not accept attachments and you must cut and paste into an email, then do as they direct. I use the same sample as shown above, changing the wording from "The attached story" to: "The story below." Everything else remains the same. Just paste your complete story below your email and website address and click "send." Easy, huh? And much faster than the U.S. Postal Service.

I hope these suggestions help you as you submit in today's changing times.

Happy writing and blessings on your work.

## ***What's Happening...***

**Writing What You Know** – I just returned from a vacation with my hubby to Hilton Head, SC. Saw alligators on the move, moss dripping from trees like feather boas, dune-covered beaches and tiny green lizards (they didn't talk like the one on the TV commercial, darn it). What have you been up to lately? Is there a story in there somewhere? Anthologies are always looking for “slice of life” pieces, usually around 1,000 to 1,200 words. Write about your life. It's something you know. Plum out of ideas? Go to the Chicken Soup or other anthology websites and look at the books they have in the works. Brainstorm with your writers group. We all have stories happening every day in our lives. You do too.

**September 30<sup>th</sup> – That's today! And it's the last day for The Summertime Exchange Program.** Have you kept track of your challenges and rewards? I'll be getting in touch within the next couple of weeks with those of you who signed up for the program.

*Follow your dreams...*

*B.J.*

**Author of :**

**“The Complete Guide to Writers Groups That Work”**

Available on Amazon.com or <http://www.buybooksontheweb.com/product.aspx?ISBN=0-7414-4099-7>

\*Check out my website at [www.bjtayloronline.com](http://www.bjtayloronline.com)

P.S. Feel free to forward this newsletter to your friends. If they'd like to be added to my list, they can email me at [newsletter@bjtayloronline.com](mailto:newsletter@bjtayloronline.com). You can also opt out of Taylor's Tips at any time. Just send me an email with “remove” in the subject line.